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SENSITIVE SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: <u>AEMR ASEC CASC KFLO MARR PREL PINR AMGT CI</u>
SUBJECT: MGCI01: CHILE EARTHQUAKE MONITORING GROUP
SITUATION REPORT NO. 3

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DEATH TOLL TOPS 700, GOC ASSESSING DAMAGES

(SBU) President Bachelet announced more than 700 people have been killed in the quake, report the media. All official Americans have been accounted for, confirms Embassy Santiago. Seventeen locally-engaged staff and 36 contract employees remain unaccounted for due to poor communications. Many Embassy families are still without electricity, reliable telephone service, or internet access. Land lines in the Santiago area remain irregular. Aftershocks continue but are diminishing in intensity and are moving northward. The media is relaying Chilean ONEMI (FEMA-equivalent) information. The government requests the population remain in place. Facebook is offering assistance in public outreach. Communications with Concepcion, Talca and the Juan Fernandez Islands remain erratic. Concepcion airport will be closed for a week. The main highway south from Concepcion is out due to a collapsed bridge, and land routes to the area have been damaged and bridges are down. Some looting has begun; police are on patrol to prevent further lawlessness. The government is providing food and water via helicopter. (MGCIO1/Embassy Santiago telcon, Embassy Santiago SitRep#4, MGCIO1/R e-mail, CNN en Espaqol)

STATUS OF EMBASSY/AMCITS

have been accounted for; the Fulbrighter in Concepcion has not yet been located. The Embassy will be open for limited services on March 1. Visa interviews will be cancelled. No American deaths have yet been reported. Embassy Santiago will maintain a 24-hour switchboard with bilingual operators at 56-2-330-3000. (MGCI01/Embassy Santiago telcon, Embassy Santiago SitRep#4)

FOREIGN ASSISTANCE

13. (SBU) The Chile Earthquake Monitoring Group is in contact with the U.S. military, HHS and USAID/OFDA to confirm availability of medical assistance, including field hospitals, as appropriate. An official request for a field hospital has been made by the Chilean government. The EU has offered 3 million Euros in disaster assistance and search and rescue, which the government has so far declined. Germany and Puerto Rico also have made offers of assistance. (MGCIO1/Embassy Santiago telcon, MGCIO1 e-mail)

SANTIAGO AIRPORT STATUS/OPERATIONS

(SBU) Santiago airport remains closed to everything but military flights. International

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commercial flights likely will not resume until March 15. The government is considering using airports in northern Chile for international flights; however, those airports are not equipped with customs and immigration systems. The Embassy intends to send staff to Santiago airport to assist American citizens gathering there to understand Spanish-language public service announcements and to inform them of lodging availability. (MGCI01/Embassy Santiago telcon, Embassy Santiago SitRep#4)

TSUNAMI DEATHS

(SBU) Six people are dead and 10 are missing after a wave hit the inhabited portions of the Juan Fernandez Islands. Chile has confirmed that two American citizens unaccounted for are not among the dead or missing. (MGCIO1/Embassy Santiago telcon) CLINTON